

Farmers benefited by support prices

†4566. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of farmers, other than marginal and small farmers, is only 25 per cent of the total population of farmers in the country;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that these 25 per cent big farmers only are benefited from the policy of enhancing support price each year; and

(d) if not, Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) As per the latest information available from Agricultural Census 1990-91, the number of operational holdings, other than marginal and small, constitutes 21.8 per cent of the total operational holdings of the country. An operational holding is defined as "all land which is used wholly or partly for agricultural production and is operated as one technical unit by one person alone or with others without regard to the title, legal form, size or location." A technical unit is one which is under the same management and has the same means of production such as labour force, machinery and animals.

(c) and (d) The Minimum Support Prices fixed by the Government are applicable to all the categories of farmers irrespective of the size of their operational holdings, and aim at ensuring payment of remunerative prices for their produce with a view to encouraging higher investment and production.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.